



# LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST PROHIBITION

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For House Bill 6566

Submitted By: John Lorenzo, on behalf of  
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST PROHIBITION (LEAP)

RE: Support for House Bill 6566, An act concerning the compassionate use of marijuana  
Joint Committee on Judiciary  
Monday, March 14, 10:00am, Room 2C of the LOB

Thank you for the opportunity to present the views of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP) in favor of House Bill 6566. As a law enforcement officer here in Connecticut, I fought against the drug war for 20 years when I served as the Chief of Marine Police for Lake Lillinonah Authority in Brookfield. I am a speaker for LEAP, an organization of 40,000 current and former criminal justice professionals and civilian supporters. We are cops, sheriffs, prosecutors, judges, prison guards and others from nearly every level of law enforcement. Like other law enforcement organizations, LEAP does not endorse or condone the use of marijuana or any other drug.

As a former officer, I know that the voice of police is crucial in the dialogue about our current drug policy, which is wasteful and ineffective. But in the case of medical marijuana, patients, physicians, and caregivers, are the ones who should be making decisions about medical care. It is inappropriate for the police to substitute our judgment for that of physicians and those in need of medical care.

One area where law enforcement is qualified to speak regarding medical marijuana is in the area of public safety. Patients need to have access to adequate amounts of medicine, however much that is deemed to be, so that they do not need to search for that medicine in the streets, risking their safety and benefiting illicit drug dealers. Patients need licensed producers as a secure and safe place to access medicine, and House Bill 6566 gives them this access. Forcing patients to go into the streets to buy marijuana benefits the criminal element and threatens patient safety. The state can vet and license legal producers and put the criminal producers out of business.

It goes beyond reason to suggest, as some members of law enforcement have, that children might break into licensed producers' sites and ingest marijuana. Children under the age of 18 consistently report that it is easier for them to obtain illicit drugs like marijuana than legally regulated drugs like tobacco and alcohol. There is no need for them to break into licensed producers' sites in order to obtain marijuana. Drug dealers do not ask for ID, but legal operations do. When it comes to the message we are sending our children about medical marijuana, the message should be the same as for any other medicine: that medicine helps sick people and is to be used only under a doctor's care.

We urge all of you to take the opinions of doctors, caregivers, and patients into account and support House Bill 6566. Thank you for your time.